

LO!

BEHOLD: THE MYSTERIOUS, THE WONDERMENT OF THE WORLD.

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"GOATSUCKER" OR HYSTERIA IN PUERTO RICO?": Blood-sucking killer leaves trail of dead farm animals throughout island! Frightened residents wearing fatigues beat bushes in search of mysterious killer! Whatever it may be, the creature responsible for a string of animal deaths this year has generated both fear and satire in this U.S. commonwealth.

Goats, hens, rabbits and geese all have fallen prey to the nocturnal killer that reputedly sucks their blood, leaving them lifeless. No one can explain why.

Angela Lajes found her dog and her sister's two cats dead in the southern city of Ponce in early November.

The daily tabloid El Vocero reported that Puerto Rico's Dracula had a field night on Halloween with a toll of five goats and 20 parakeets "sucked dead." It depicted the killer as a pointy-tailed devil.

Mayor Jose Soto of the northeastern town of Canovanas has led two search parties, some of the vigilantes wearing fatigues and carrying guns, to find the culprit since October 29.

Soto plans another search soon. He says he knows the creature is close because he can smell it - like a pig farm, only stronger, "It has killed more than 40 animals in this town. The farmers are worried," said Soto, who is seeking re-election next year.

Residents of this Spanish-speaking U.S. commonwealth have dubbed the creature "chupacabras," or "goatsucker."

The San Juan Star newspaper dedicated a humor column to the mystery, headlined "Hunting for the Goatsucker." The searchers, it said, found a political party was killing the animals to divert attention while it registered voters for next year's San Juan mayoral election.

The only case examined by the government's veterinary services indicated that the killers were stray dogs, office director Hector Garcia said. His veterinarians studied sheep, including about 10 that died and two that had marks but had survived. Source: Katherine Hill, Associated Press Nov. 23, 1995 via Curt Sutherly.

UFOs CAUSE MEDICAL PROBLEMS IN SOMALILAND: Officials in the self-declared republic of Somaliland asked the international community to help them unravel the mystery behind two explosions from unidentified flying objects seen over the Gulf of Aden state in December 5 and 7. "A few days after the explosions, inhabitants came down with various ailments such as coughing, diarrhea, breathing difficulties and headaches," a government minister told a Reuters reporter. Children were the worst affected, and several died. Animals were seen "running wild and uncontrolled" after the blasts, with some tearing at trees. The low-flying objects were observed by many as they exploded, causing

THE INTELLECTUAL NEWSLETTER THAT CHALLENGES THE MIND.

windows to shatter. No debris from the explosion has been discovered on the ground. Source: "Earthweek", February 6, 1996.

TARGET: SOUTH AMERICA: The Daily Herald report of March 6, 1931 describes the fall of "three great meteors which fired and depopulated hundreds of miles of jungle. The fires continued uninterrupted for some months, depopulating a large area." Unfortunately, although the fall is said to have occurred around "8 o'clock in the morning" and to have been preceded by remarkable atmospheric disturbances (a "blood-red" sun, an ear-piercing "whistling" sound, and the fall of fine ash which covered trees and vegetation with a blanket of white), few details are provided that constrain the time and place of the event. Nevertheless, the story refers to an article in the papal newspaper L'Osservatore Romano March 1, 1931 apparently written by a Catholic missionary "Father Fidello, of Aviano", and it is to this that we now turn. Apparently, there were three bolides or fireballs seen. Father Fidello wrote: "They landed in the centre of the forest with a triple shock similar to the rumble of thunder and the splash of lightning. There were three distinct explosions, each stronger than the other, causing earth tremors like those of an earthquake. A very light rain of ash continued to fall for a few hours and the sun remained veiled till midday. The explosion of the bodies were heard hundreds of kilometres away."

Source: Science Frontiers, No. 103, Jan-Feb 1996.

ANOTHER COLORADO MUTILATION: For Weston resident Mike Duran, things in the tranquil area west of Trinidad took a turn for the weird November 26th. Duran, a teacher in School District Number One, discovered that one of his cows had been mysteriously mutilated. The 900-pound animal, which had recently given birth, was found on its back, with its front legs in a strange bent position. The cow's udders and female sex organ had been removed with surgeon-like precision. A large circular hole in the animal's lower stomach remains an eerie testament to its bizarre demise. Furthermore, the bovine's horns had also been removed. Duran later found them approximately 20 yards from the animal.

Duran said no tracks or prints of any sort were observed around the animal, and only a minute portion of blood, produced when the horns were removed, was detected. The area where the udders were extracted bore no burn marks or jagged edges.

"I saw the cow on Saturday evening," Duran said. "And then on Sunday, I found it. It gives me a kind of spooky feeling."

While Duran called the incident "puzzling," he could not offer an explanation - "I just don't know."

Sheriff Lou Girodo, who has investigated a number of cattle mutilations, refused to classify the incident as a mutilation. "I had one of my deputies check it out. It's just an unusual death, possibly by bear or coyote. This doesn't meet the criteria of a cattle mutilation."

Ron Rankin, area biology instructor, said that wounds consistent with a kill by a mountain lion would be "bites to the back of the neck, possibly even the spine." A kill by a bear would most likely be "a crushing blow to the skull."

Rankin, who did not visit the site of the mutilation but observed the removed horns, said he believes the cow was the victim of predators, based on his prior experiences.

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"There was no bite on the neck, and no head injury," said Duran. "This was no predator. I've been around long enough to know a predator attack from a strange incident like this. There were no rips or signs of an attack or struggle.

"If it had been a bear or coyote, I wouldn't have called the sheriff." The horns, Duran said, were in perfect condition, notwithstanding a few chew marks made by a dog which found the horns in a field. According to Rankin, marks on the horns were consistent with the bite of a mountain lion. My dad looked all over the area for tracks," Duran said. "Even up and down the river bottom. There was nothing."

Today, Thursday, Robert Philbin, local physics instructor, conducted a Geiger counter test on a portion of the cow's skin. The test uncovered "no radiation beyond what normally comes from living things, such as cows and humans."

Philbin, however, said that "a number of radioactive isotopes with short half-lives would remain radioactive for only a matter of hours." If the cow came in contact with isotopes such as these, "Over a couple of days the radiation would be gone." Source: Chronicle News, Trinidad, Colorado November 30, 1995.

METEOR OR "?" FALLS IN OREGON: Cecil Mecham of Summerville did not land many trout during a recent fishing trip at Jubilee Lake.

But what he did land will be permanently etched in his memory.

Mecham believes he may have seen a meteor fall into the lake north of Elgin at about 4:35 p.m. on Sept. 10. He was near shore when he saw the object splashing into the lake's water.

What he observed next is why he thinks the object was out of this world. He described a "large, radiating, expelled wake" in the water.

Mecham then saw many large bubbles emerging, followed by a "turpid boiling action" that moved outward until it formed a four-foot circle.

All of this created a foot-high wake.

Mecham said he first thought the object was something that had fallen out of an airplane. There was no one near the lake who could have tossed the object. Mecham recalled that he had not heard or seen any aircraft flying over the lake.

He did hear a curious noise before the object hit the water.

"It sounded like the incoming mail of an enemy cruiser," said Mecham, who became familiar with the sound while serving in the Navy during World War II.

Meteorite scientist Dick Pugh of Portland plans to investigate Mecham's report. If a meteor is found at Jubilee Lake it might be the first one ever located in Eastern Oregon, according to Pugh. Source: Dick Mason, La Grande, OR Observer, September 19, 1995.

FROZEN MUMMIES FOUND IN PERU: The discovery of three frozen mummies, including two young women apparently sacrificed to the gods 500 years ago, provides a valuable insight into Peru's Incan empire, archeologists said recently.

The well-preserved human remains, surrounded by elaborate ornaments, were found last week on an icy 6,300-metre peak in the Peruvian Andes.

Experts said the "icewomen," aged between 14 and 18, were ritually sacrificed on the remote Ampato volcano, in the southern province of Caylloma, probably in a plea for rain.

The women's bodies were wrapped in finely woven wool and they wore elaborate feather headdresses, he added. Accompanying the bodies were rare cloths, ceramics and three tiny human figures made from gold, silver and sea-shell.

A young man was sacrificed with them, possibly to serve as a guardian in the afterlife. Source: The Toronto Star October 26, 1995.

SINGING SANDS IN MONGOLIA: A series of singing dunes has been discovered in the Badainjaran Desert in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The Xinhua news agency reported that the find was made recently by the Chinese Academy of Science. The researchers found that in a soft wind, the dunes sing or groan, or make the sound of an airplane in flight. Zu Jiangjun, a young scientist, has deduced that the singing sound may be caused when grains of uniform size rub each other and move together. Source: Daily News, Anchorage, Alaska December 3, 1995.

FORT LAUDERDALE REMEMBERS 1945 "LOST PATROL": A bell tolled once for each of the 14 crew members aboard Navy planes that disappeared 50 years ago near the Bermuda Triangle during a routine mission. The missing bombers and the lead pilot's radio transmission that his compasses had stopped working have fueled the Bermuda Triangle legend. Among the theories is that the entire squadron was snatched by space aliens. To compound the tragedy, a seaplane, dispatched that night to search for the five missing planes, crashed and exploded in rough seas, killing 13. Hundreds, including relatives of the crew and aviators, gathered Tuesday to remember the men of Flight 19. Many at the ceremony near where the bombers took off didn't buy into the Bermuda Triangle mystique. "I hope that this program...will put to rest once and for all, the needless innuendoes, speculation, and sensational journalism relative to this event," said Navy Lt. Cdr. Maurice Schmidt, who gave the benediction.

"They are not lost. I repeat, they are not lost. The Lord knows, and it is my hope that they are with Him in paradise," he said.

Retired Navy radioman John Barna dismissed the wild rumors. He says he was in a plane that took off right after Flight 19 and flew with them briefly before veering off on a separate mission.

"One day, at work, some guy came up to me and said how the UFOs came and gobbled up this squadron of airplanes," said Barna, 69 from Haddon Township, N.J. "And I said, 'You're talking to the right guy, buddy, 'cause I flew with them, and I didn't see the UFOs.'"

The five TBM Avengers left on a practice torpedo bombing run Dec. 5, 1945, to fly 56 miles to a bombing range near the Bahamas.

Flight 19's disappearance became part of the legend of the Bermuda Triangle, a section of ocean between Florida, Bermuda and Puerto Rico where aircraft and ships have vanished mysteriously.

Source: Conway, Arkansas Log Cabin Democrat December 6, 1995.

ELVES IN THE SKY: Scientists have discovered a new class of lightning that exists high above thunderheads and that flickers in blazing disks on the fringes of space, spreading out laterally for hundreds of miles. The dance of this mysterious light joins a number of unusual bolts that scientists have recently found shooting upward from clouds as high as 60 miles above the earth.

The newly observed lightning flashes have been named ELVES, with no Yuletide link intended. The name is an acronym derived from the phrase "emissions of light and very low frequency perturbations due to electromagnetic pulse sources."

Remarkably, ELVES are higher, brighter and larger than the other newly discovered types of lightning. They were long overlooked not only because intervening thunderheads obscured views of their domain but because their flash is so quick - less than a thousandth of a second. In contrast, regular lightning can scintillate for a second or more. Source: Journal American, Bellevue, WA Dec. 12, 1995.